

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL**

Criminal Justice Statistics Special Report

Homicide in North Dakota, 2016



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July 2017

The term "homicide," for purposes of this report, includes the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) offenses of murder and non-negligent manslaughter. Homicide refers to the "willful killing of one human being by another." It does not include attempts to kill, assaults to kill, suicides, accidental deaths, justifiable homicides or deaths caused by gross negligence.

HOMICIDE IN 2016

- In 2016, seventeen homicide deaths were known to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. Based on a state population estimate of 757,952, the resulting homicide rate for the state of North Dakota was 2.2 per 100,000 population. See Table 2 on page 3 for information regarding rates for previous years.
- **Victim Gender:** Twelve of the homicide victims were male.
- **Victim Age:** All of the victims were adults. "Adult" is defined as a person aged 18 or older. See Table 1 on page 2 for a summary of homicide incidents in 2016.
- **Weapons:** Firearms were involved in the deaths of eight homicide victims.
- **Domestic Violence:** There were two homicides in 2016 resulting from domestic violence incidents. See definition on page 10.
- **Assailant Gender:** Fifteen of the seventeen identified assailants were male.
- **Assailant Age:** All of the identified assailants were adults.
- While tribal law enforcement agencies and any other federal law enforcement entities in the state do not participate in the state UCR program, every effort is made to include all homicide incidents occurring within the state's borders.

**Table 1
Summary of Homicide Incidents
North Dakota, 2016**

Date & Location of Incident	Victim(s)		Assailant(s)		Weapons Used	Relationship of Victim to Assailant	Circumstances
	Age	Sex	Age	Sex			
2/7/16 Ransom County	28	M	28	M	Rifle	Acquaintance	Unknown Circumstances
2/9/16 Spirit Lake Res.	36	F			Blunt Object		Unknown Circumstances
2/10/16 Fargo	32	M	49	M	Rifle	On-duty Police Officer	Assault on LE Officer Murder/Suicide
3/1/16 Minot	28	M	26	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Brother	Argument Domestic Violence
3/11/16 Grand Forks PD	24	M	31	F	Firearm	Otherwise Known	Unknown Circumstances
4/5/16 Bismarck	61	M	55	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Acquaintance	Other Circumstances
4/9/16 Spirit Lake Res.	52	M	35	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Friend	Argument
4/14/16 Bismarck	40	F	33	M	Personal Weapon	Acquaintance	Unknown Circumstances
5/12/16 Fargo	40	F	22	M	Personal Weapon	Acquaintance	Unknown Circumstances
5/17/16 Williston	24 23	M M	31	M	Handgun	Acquaintance Acquaintance	Argument
6/6/16 Golden Valley SO	24	M	22	M	Handgun	Acquaintance	Other Circumstances
8/20/16 Bowman PD	23	M	26 21	F M	Blunt Object	Acquaintance Acquaintance	Other Circumstances
8/21/16 West Fargo	45	F	55	M	Handgun	Ex-Spouse	Unknown Circumstances Murder/Suicide Domestic Violence
9/21/16 Spirit Lake Res.	27	F					Unknown Circumstances
11/26/16 Mandan	34	M	30 43 24	M M M	Handgun	Acquaintance Acquaintance Acquaintance	Argument
12/24/16 Fargo	26	M	31	M	Knife/Cutting Instrument	Friend	Argument

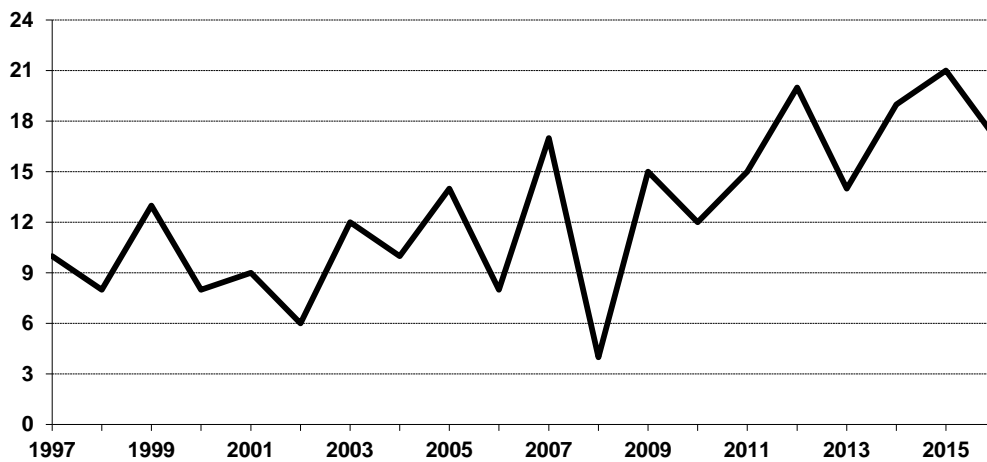
HOMICIDE TOTALS AND RATES

- Table 2 provides yearly homicide totals and homicide rate information for North Dakota during the period 1997-2016.
- The average number of homicide deaths per year during this period is 13.

Table 2
Homicide Rate
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Year	Homicide Total	Population Estimate	Rate/100,000 Population
1997	10	641,000	1.6
1998	8	638,000	1.3
1999	13	634,000	2.1
2000	8	642,200	1.2
2001	9	634,450	1.4
2002	6	634,110	0.9
2003	12	634,000	1.9
2004	10	634,500	1.6
2005	14	637,000	2.2
2006	8	636,000	1.3
2007	17	640,000	2.7
2008	4	641,500	0.6
2009	15	647,000	2.3
2010	12	672,591	1.6
2011	15	683,932	2.2
2012	20	699,628	2.9
2013	14	723,393	1.9
2014	19	739,482	2.6
2015	21	756,927	2.7
2016	17	757,952	2.2

Figure 1
Homicide in North Dakota
1997-2016



VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS - GENDER

- Sixty-five percent of the 252 total homicide victims during the period 1997-2016 were male.

Table 3
Gender of Homicide Victims
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Year	Male	Female	Total
1997	7	3	10
1998	6	2	8
1999	9	4	13
2000	4	4	8
2001	7	2	9
2002	2	4	6
2003	6	6	12
2004	7	3	10
2005	8	6	14
2006	4	4	8
2007	7	10	17
2008	3	1	4
2009	7	8	15
2010	8	4	12
2011	10	5	15
2012	14	6	20
2013	9	5	14
2014	17	2	19
2015	16	5	21
2016	12	5	17
Total 1997-2016	163 (65%)	89 (34%)	252

VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS - AGE

- Of the 252 homicides during the period 1997-2016, 83 percent were adults. See Table 4 below.
- Forty-two percent of homicide victims were between the ages of 21 and 40. See Table 5 on the following page for information regarding age and gender of victims.

**Table 4
Homicide Victims
Juvenile and Adult
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Year	Juvenile	Adult	Total
1997		10	10
1998	2	6	8
1999	2	11	13
2000		8	8
2001		9	9
2002	2	4	6
2003	2	10	12
2004	3	7	10
2005	2	12	14
2006	2	6	8
2007	4	13	17
2008	2	2	4
2009	4	11	15
2010	1	11	12
2011	4	11	15
2012	6	14	20
2013	2	12	14
2014	1	18	19
2015	4	17	21
2016		17	17
Total 1997-2016	43	209	252

**Table 5
Homicide Victims
By Age and Gender
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Age	Male	Female	Total
Less than 1 year	12	11	23
01-05	2	2	4
06-10	4	2	6
11-15	3		3
16-20	17	9	26
21-25	25	3	28
26-30	26	7	33
31-35	12	5	17
36-40	15	13	28
41-45	5	14	19
46-50	13	6	19
51-55	9	4	13
56-60	8	2	10
61-65	3	3	6
Over 65	9	8	17
Total 1997-2016	163	89	252

WEAPONS AND VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS

- Thirty-eight percent of deaths due to homicide during the period 1997-2016 resulted from firearm use. See Table 6 below.
- In homicides involving firearms, the weapon was more likely to be a long gun than a handgun.
- Fifty of the 252 total homicide deaths involved the use of "personal weapons." Personal weapons include the use of hands, fists and feet as weapons.

**Table 6
Weapons of Homicide
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Year	Handgun	Other Firearm	Knife	Blunt Instrument	Personal Weapon	Other or Unknown	Total
1997		1	1	2	4	2	10
1998		3	2			3	8
1999	1	4	3	1		4	13
2000	2	1	2	1	2		8
2001	2	3	1	1	2		9
2002	1	1			2	2	6
2003	4	7			1		12
2004		5		1	1	3	10
2005	2	1	1	2	5	3	14
2006	1		4		2	1	8
2007	4		2	1	6	4	17
2008			2		2		4
2009	3	3	2	2	3	2	15
2010	2	5	1	1	3		12
2011	2	4	6	1	2		15
2012	1	6	6	1	2	4	20
2013		4	6	2	2		14
2014	1	5	5	1	4	3	19
2015	5	4	4	1	5	2	21
2016	5	3	4	2	2	1	17
Total 1997-2016	36	60	52	20	50	34	252

- Firearms were used in 19 percent of the homicides of juveniles. Forty-two percent of adult deaths due to homicide involved firearms. See Table 7 below.
- Thirty-seven percent of homicides of males and 41 percent of homicides of females involved the use of firearms. See Table 8.
- Twenty-three percent of homicides of males and 17 percent of homicides of females involved knives.

**Table 7
Homicide Victims
By Weapon and Age Category
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Weapon	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Handgun		36	36
Other Firearm	8	52	60
Knife	2	50	52
Blunt Instrument		20	20
Personal Weapon	20	30	50
Other or Unknown	13	21	34
Total 1997-2016	43	209	252

**Table 8
Homicide Victims
By Weapon and Gender
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Weapon	Male	Female	Total
Handgun	25	11	36
Other Firearm	35	25	60
Knife	37	15	52
Blunt Instrument	15	5	20
Personal Weapon	29	21	50
Other or Unknown	22	12	34
Total 1997-2016	163	89	252

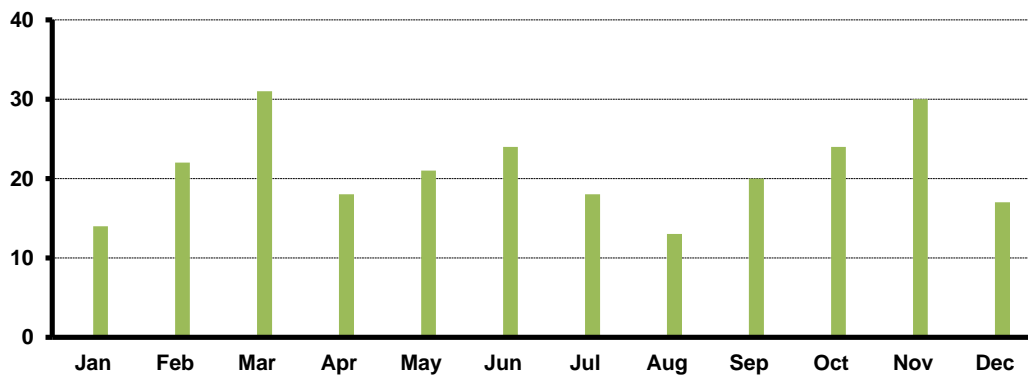
MONTH OF OCCURRENCE

- During the period 1997-2016, the month of March had the highest number of homicide deaths. See Table 9 below. Figure 2 illustrates this information graphically.

**Table 9
Deaths Due to Homicide
By Month, 1997-2016**

Month	Number	Percent of Total Homicides
January	14	5.6%
February	22	8.7
March	31	12.3
April	18	7.2
May	21	8.3
June	24	9.5
July	18	7.2
August	13	5.2
September	20	7.9
October	24	9.5
November	30	11.9
December	17	6.7
Total 1997-2016	252	100.0

**Figure 2
Homicides by Month of Occurrence
North Dakota, 1997-2016**



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DEATHS

For purposes of this report, domestic violence deaths include those involving a spouse, former spouse, parent, child, persons related by blood or marriage, persons in a present or former dating relationship, persons who are presently residing together or have resided together in the past, persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they are or have been married or have lived together at any time, other persons on premises when a domestic incident occurs, and romantic triangle situations.

- For the period 1997-2016, 45 percent of deaths due to homicide involved domestic violence.

**Table 10
Domestic Violence Deaths
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic	No Assailant Identified	Homicide Total
1997	2	8		10
1998	6	2		8
1999	7	6		13
2000	6	1	1	8
2001	2	7		9
2002	4	1	1	6
2003	8	4		12
2004	6	4		10
2005	6	7	1	14
2006	4	3	1	8
2007	7	9	1	17
2008		4		4
2009	12	3		15
2010	6	6		12
2011	7	7	1	15
2012	6	13	1	20
2013	7	7		14
2014	6	12	1	19
2015	9	9	3	21
2016	2	13	2	17
Total 1997-2016	113	126	13	252

- Persons killed in domestic violence incidents were more likely to be killed with a firearm than those killed in non-domestic incidents.
- Forty-seven percent of female deaths in domestic violence incidents involved firearms, while 26 percent of female deaths in non-domestic violence incidents involved firearms.
- Seventy-eight percent of female homicide victims were killed in domestic violence incidents, compared to 31 percent of males.

Table 11
Domestic Violence Deaths
By Type of Weapon and Age Category of Victim
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult
Handgun		13		22
Other Firearm	4	27	4	24
Knife	2	21		27
Blunt Instrument		9		10
Personal Weapon	15	9	4	20
Other or Unknown	8	5	4	11
Total 1997-2016	29	84	12	114

Table 12
Domestic Violence Deaths
By Type of Weapon and Gender of Victim
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Handgun	3	10	21	1
Other Firearm	10	21	24	4
Knife	13	10	22	5
Blunt Instrument	5	4	10	
Personal Weapon	8	16	20	4
Other or Unknown	8	5	10	5
Total 1997-2016	47	66	107	19

CLEARANCE RATES

- Cases may be "cleared by arrest" of an assailant, or "cleared exceptionally," if a physical arrest cannot be made for reasons beyond the control of law enforcement. An example of an exceptional clearance would be a case in which the assailant committed suicide after killing someone.
- "Clearances" should not be interpreted as "convictions." The information regarding clearances, collected through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) program, reflects law enforcement activity. If an arrest is made, the NIBRS program considers the case cleared. NIBRS data does not reflect the results of prosecution of assailants.
- The average clearance rate for homicides in North Dakota during the period from 1997 to 2016 is 95 percent.

**Table 13
Clearance Rates for Homicides
North Dakota, 1997-2016**

Year	Total Cleared	Total Homicides	North Dakota Clearance Rate	National Clearance Rate*
1997	10	10	100	66
1998	8	8	100	69
1999	13	13	100	69
2000	7	8	88	63
2001	9	9	100	63
2002	5	6	83	64
2003	12	12	100	62
2004	10	10	100	63
2005	12	14	86	62
2006	7	8	88	61
2007	15	17	88	61
2008	4	4	100	64
2009	15	15	100	67
2010	12	12	100	65
2011	14	15	93	65
2012	19	20	95	63
2013	14	14	100	64
2014	18	19	95	65
2015	18	21	86	62
2016	15	17	88	Not Available

* Clearance rates reported in annual Crime in the United States reports published by the FBI.

IDENTIFIED ASSAILANT CHARACTERISTICS - GENDER

- During the period 1997-2016, 87 percent of the 255 identified homicide assailants were male.
- Thirteen homicides during 1997-2016 have not had an assailant identified by law enforcement.

Table 14
Identified Homicide Assailants
By Gender
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Year	Male	Female	Total
1997	8	1	9
1998	5	3	8
1999	9	2	11
2000	7	1	8 *
2001	11		11
2002	5		5 *
2003	9		9
2004	13	1	14
2005	13	1	14 *
2006	6	1	7 *
2007	14	3	17 *
2008	6	1	7
2009	15	2	17
2010	11	1	12
2011	11	2	13 *
2012	15	2	17 *
2013	13	4	17
2014	18	4	22 *
2015	18	2	20 *
2016	15	2	17*
Total 1997-2016	222 (87%)	33 (13%)	255

* Indicates that at least one incident for the year does not have an identified assailant.

- Ninety-eight percent of the total 255 assailants identified by law enforcement were adults. See Table 15 below.
- Of the 255 assailants identified by law enforcement, 68 percent were between the ages of 16 and 35. See Table 16 on the following page for information on age and gender of identified assailants.

Table 15
Identified Homicide Assailants
Juvenile and Adult
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Year	Juvenile	Adult	Total
1997		9	9
1998	1	7	8
1999		11	11
2000		8	8 *
2001		11	11
2002		5	5 *
2003		9	9
2004		14	14
2005		14	14 *
2006		7	7 *
2007	3	14	17 *
2008		7	7
2009		17	17
2010		12	12
2011		13	13 *
2012	1	16	17 *
2013		17	17
2014		22	22 *
2015		20	20 *
2016		17	17 *
Total 1997-2016	5 (2%)	250 (98%)	255

* Indicates that at least one incident for the year does not have an identified assailant.

Table 16
Identified Homicide Assailants
By Age and Gender
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Age	Male	Female	Total
Less than 10			0
11-15	1	1	2
16-20	32	4	36
21-25	51	9	60
26-30	38	7	45
31-35	29	4	33
36-40	14	1	15
41-45	17	4	21
46-50	18	1	19
51-55	9	1	10
56-60	6	1	7
61-65	3		3
Over 65	4		4
Total 1997-2016	222	33	255

WEAPONS AND IDENTIFIED ASSAILANT CHARACTERISTICS

- In homicide incidents involving firearms, adult assailants were much more likely to use firearms other than handguns.
- Male assailants were more likely to use firearms in homicide incidents, while females were more likely to use knives.

Table 17
Identified Assailants
By Type of Weapon and Age Category
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Handgun		35	35
Other Firearm		53	53
Knife	1	60	61
Blunt Instrument		23	23
Personal Weapon	3	53	56
Other or Unknown	1	26	27
Total 1997-2016	5	250	255

Table 18
Identified Assailants
By Type of Weapon and Gender
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Male	Female	Total
Handgun	35		35
Other Firearm	50	3	53
Knife	50	11	61
Blunt Instrument	22	1	23
Personal Weapon	46	10	56
Other or Unknown	19	8	27
Total 1997-2016	222	33	255

- Forty-five percent of assailants identified by law enforcement were involved in domestic violence incidents. See Table 19 below.
- Assailants were more likely to use firearms in domestic incidents than in non-domestic incidents. See Table 20.
- Knives were more likely to be used by assailants in non-domestic incidents.

Table 19
Identified Homicide Assailants
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Year	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
1997	2	7	9
1998	6	2	8
1999	6	5	11
2000	6	2	8 *
2001	2	9	11
2002	4	1	5 *
2003	6	3	9
2004	6	8	14
2005	7	7	14 *
2006	4	3	7 *
2007	9	8	17 *
2008		7	7
2009	14	3	17
2010	6	6	12
2011	7	6	13 *
2012	6	11	17 *
2013	6	11	17
2014	6	16	22 *
2015	9	11	20 *
2016	2	15	17 *
Total 1997-2016	114 (45%)	141 (55%)	255

* Indicates that at least one incident for the year does not have an identified assailant.

Table 20
Weapon Use by Identified Assailants
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Domestic	Non-Domestic	Total
Handgun	15	20	35
Other Firearm	28	25	53
Knife	21	40	61
Blunt Instrument	10	13	23
Personal Weapon	26	30	56
Other or Unknown	14	13	27
Total 1997-2016	114	141	255

Table 21
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
By Type of Weapon and Age Category of Assailant
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Juvenile	Adult	Juvenile	Adult
Handgun		15		20
Other Firearm		28		25
Knife		21	1	39
Blunt Instrument		10		13
Personal Weapon	2	24	1	29
Other or Unknown	1	13		13
Total 1997-2016	3	111	2	139

Table 22
Domestic/Non-Domestic Incidents
By Type of Weapon and Gender of Assailant
North Dakota, 1997-2016

Weapon	Domestic		Non-Domestic	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Handgun	15		20	
Other Firearm	26	2	24	1
Knife	15	6	35	5
Blunt Instrument	10		12	1
Personal Weapon	17	9	29	1
Other or Unknown	6	8	13	
Total 1997-2016	89	25	133	8